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From their own observations on the expedition, as well as in the laboratory, combined with those of earlier workers on the subject, the authors came to the conclusion that the principal cause of mountain sickness must be seen in the lack of oxygen in the higher altitudes. Problems of geographical bearing arise on several occasions during the discussion of the varying adaptability of mountain dwellers to their environment. The suggestion, for instance, that the superstitious awe of the high mountains shown by primitive peoples, and the legends which populate them with evil beings hostile to man, might be traced to the influences of mountain sickness upon primitive intruders, is certainly worth further investigation. Likewise the question, whether the gradual acclimatisation to the change of altitudes experienced by the tourist may be symptomatic of racial adaptations to the same by the permanent inhabitants of the different altitudes, opens up perspectives of interesting study for the ethnologist. The book is splendidly illustrated and an appendix contains the original tables of the observations made by the party. As a compendium of the symptoms, phases, and treatment of the influences of mountain climate on man, the book cannot be surpassed and will be found a never failing source of reference for any one who approaches the subject from the medical, geographical, or tourist point of view.

M. K. G

The Desert and the Sown. By Gertrude Lowthian Bell. With many Illustrations and a Map. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York, 1907.

As a traveller and as a story-teller Miss Bell ranks with Mrs. Isabella Bird Bishop. Both travelled in out-of-the-way places where the inhabitants are prone to be unfriendly, and where none but the bravest of women would dare to go alone; both succeeded to a remarkable degree in winning the confidence of the natives, and in entering into their life and feelings; and both have written narratives of unusual interest. In the present volume Miss Bell relates her experiences in the borderland between Syria and Arabia, a region to which she applies the words of Omar Khayyám:

"the strip of Herbage strown

That just divides the desert from the sown."

Starting from Jerusalem early in February, 1905, she went east across the deep *graben* of the Jordan Valley, and up to the Belka, or Plain of Moab, a land of "swell and fall, fall and swell, as though the desert breathed quietly under the gathering night." Here she crossed the new Mecca railroad which now runs from Aleppo nearly to Medina. Then, turning north, she made her way along the edge of the desert through the Druze country of volcanic Jebel Hauran to Damascus. Thence she zigzagged through the Lebanon by Baalbek and Hamath to Aleppo, and finally west to the sea by way of Antioch, lovely even in its ruins.

The journey lasted only two months. At no time was Miss Bell more than 125 miles from the sea; during half the journey she was within 30 miles of a railroad; and she never was more than 70 miles from steam communication, either by rail or boat. Nevertheless she traversed regions where the people are still absolutely untouched by civilization; and frequently her track led over ground almost unknown to Europeans. The railroad, it must be remembered, is new. Moreover, it lies on the very edge of the almost impenetrable desert. As yet the new means of locomotion has not produced much effect, even upon

the people who live near it. Many of them, indeed, consider it a doubtful blessing because it brings in its train officials and soldiers who commandeer camels and mares wholesale without recompense, and who cannot be disarmed by hospitality as the Arabs can. For a distance of a few miles the railroad brings a certain sense of security from raids from the desert, and it brings opportunities to make a living. Therefore a few Arabs appear to be giving up the nomadic life and settling down to agriculture. The fellahin also are described as extending the area of cultivation, and Circassians from Russia are taking up new land. The entire area of cultivation is very small, however, compared with what it must have been previous to the 5th or 6th century, in the flourishing days of the ruins which continually arouse Miss Bell's enthusiasm. East of the "strip of herbage strown," which lies between the railroad and the Jordan, the great desert is as yet utterly unaffected by modern innovations. Now, as always, a war is in progress, its chief cause being found in some of the raids and blood feuds which Miss Bell vividly describes: "As for the end, there is no end to war in the desert."

Miss Bell does not pretend to write a complete description of eastern and northern Syria. She merely tells what she saw, whether it was a beautiful view in the Lebanon, a plain of black volcanic blocks at the base of the Jebel Druze, or a peasant in picturesque guise. Nor does she often attempt to theorize or draw conclusions. Her chief enthusiasm is for archæology. Some of the ruins which she describes are new discoveries, and most are familiar only to archæologists. The most interesting are those of northern Syria, built in part by the Crusaders, but largely the work of Romanized Syrians during the first five centuries after Christ. The beauty of some of the old churches and country houses leads to one of Miss Bell's few generalizations. Here, she says, we find "the beginning of a new chapter in the architecture of the world. The fine and simple beauty of Romanesque was born in North Syria. It is curious to consider to what developments the genius of these architects might have led if they had not been checked by the Arab invasion. Certain it is that we should have had an independent school of great builders, strongly influenced, perhaps, by classical tradition and yet more strongly by the East, but everywhere asserting an unmistakable personality as bold as it was imaginative and delicate."

The best part of "The Desert and the Sown" is the insight which it gives into the thoughts of the people. Everywhere Miss Bell seems to have won their confidence, whether they were Arab chiefs in goat's hair tents, Druze peasants in houses of black lava, Turkish officials in the palaces of Damascus, or women kept in captivity in old Saracen castles because their beauty would cause quarrels if they were seen abroad. "An oriental city," she says, "will not admit you into the circle of its intimates unless you spend months within its walls, and not even then if you will not take pains to please." Miss Bell evidently took pains to please; and, moreover, she knows Arabic thoroughly, and thereby was able to understand the thoughts of the people in a day, as one who depends on an interpreter cannot in a twelvemonth. Her style of reproducing conversations suggests Doughty's famous 'Arabia Deserta' somewhat, but perhaps it is merely because both she and he have caught and passed on the true tang of the Arabs and the East. However that may be, she gives a most vivid picture of life as it is to-day in Syria,—a picture which is of especial value because of the changes which must follow upon the opening of the railway, the establishment of steam

mills, the influx of tourists, and all that the West pours into the East. In putting away the book one agrees with the servant who said to Miss Bell, "Listen, oh lady, and I will make it clear to you. Men are short of vision and they see but that for which they look. Some look for evil and they find evil; some look for good and it is good that they find, and moreover, some are fortunate, and these find always what they want. Praise be to God! to that number you belong."

E. H.

Larger Types of American Geography. Second Series of Type Studies. By Charles A. McMurry. Pp. 271. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1907.

McMurry's *Larger Types of American Geography* is the third volume in a series devoted to certain selected areas in America. The volume is really a supplementary reader for elementary schools, containing chapters on The Appalachian Mountains, The Rocky Mountains, The Pennsylvania Railroad, The First Pacific Railroad, The Mississippi River, The Iron and Steel Business, Cotton Mills and Cotton Manufacture, and New York City. Each chapter is well illustrated and gives a somewhat detailed account of the general and geographic conditions involved. The author has not restricted himself to the geographic features only, and some of the chapters are not as clearly organized as they might be. The book is, however, a good reference volume for children, and its value would be greatly increased by an index—the lack of which is almost inexcusable in any work in modern times.

R. E. D.

Mathematical Geography. By Willis E. Johnson. 336 pp., 122 figures. American Book Company, 1907.

"The subject-matter of mathematical geography is scattered about in many works, and no one book treats the subject with any degree of thoroughness, or even makes a pretense at doing so. It is with the view of meeting the need for such a volume that this work has been undertaken." With these words the author introduces this most interesting text on "Mathematical Geography," designed for use in the secondary schools and for teachers' preparation. The more practical phases of the subject are treated in a manner well calculated to hold the interest of both student and teacher.

After some introductory paragraphs, the author discusses our conceptions of the earth as a sphere, as an oblate spheroid, and as a geoid, tracing the growth of our knowledge concerning the earth's true shape, and presenting proofs of the correctness of our present ideas. Some practical exercises are introduced to give the student a proper appreciation of directions on the earth, and to make the shape of the earth seem more real to him. Latitude and longitude are defined, and the origin of the terms considered.

The apparent movement of the stars is next explained, and other proofs of the earth's rotation are given. The method of determining latitude from observation of the North star is made clear by figures indicating the necessary corrections. Several paragraphs discuss time in its relation to longitude, circumnavigation and the calendar, emphasizing the practical aspects of these relations by citing instances in which they have had an important bearing on actual problems. Another chapter is devoted to a discussion of the proof and effects of the earth's revolution, and the methods of determining longitude and time.

The seasons are considered at some length, as well as the variations in the